applications accepted under TATKAL scheme are processed for urgent issue before 35 days.

Newsitem regarding removal of Indian languages from South African curriculum

517. SHRI C. RAAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the South African Government was planning to remove Indian languages like Telegu, Tamil, Gujarati etc. from the curriculum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken by Government to see that the people of Indian origin are not denied access to the language of the country of their origin;

(d) whether there is any scheme to propagate Indian languages in the countries where PIOs live in good number; and

(e) if so, the details of the scheme and the steps taken for development of Indian languages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) South Africa has officially announced that due to low enrolment rates and inadequate funding, some languages like Urdu, Tamil, Gujarati, Hindi and Hebrew may be discontinued from the curriculum.

(c) Currently concerned organization of Persons of Indian Origin in South Africa and the South African Government are discussing how to support continued teaching of Indian Languages.

(d) and (e) The Indian mission/posts in South Africa have been actively promoting Indian culture and languages. Missions provide assistance to local organizations, through donation of books and educational materials in Indian languages and scholarships.